

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TORONT 01285 272205Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 TRSE-00 /069 W
-----281712Z 095743 /40

R 272004Z MAY 77
FM AMCONSUL TORONTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5545
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG
ALL CONSULATES GENERAL IN CANADA

UNCLAS TORONTO 1285

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS:PGOV, CA
SUBJECT: ONTARIO ELECTIONS -- STATUS REPORT

REF: TORONTO 1040

1. SUMMARY. WITH ELECTION DAY JUNE 9, 9,6 2 WEEKS AWAY, GENERAL CONSENSUS IS THAT PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES WILL BE RETURNED WITH MAJORITY IN ONTARIO GENERAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, THAT NDP WILL CONTINUE AS OPPOSITION PARTY AND THAT PROVINCIAL LIBERALS WILL CONTINUE IN THIRD PLACE BUT WITH SMALLER NUMBER OF MPPS AND LOWER TOTAL POPULAR VOTE. END SUMMARY.

2. PREMIER DAVIS' TORY MACHINE, IN THE OPINION OF MOST TORONTONIANS, THE MEDIA AND POLLS, SHOULD CAPTURE A CLEAR MAJORITY IN JUNE 9. ELECTIONS. SOME SOURCES, INCLUDING FRIENDS ACTIVE IN OPPOSITION CAMPAIGNS, SUGGEST TORIES MAY CAPTURE AS MANY AS 75 OF ASSEMBLY'S 125 SEATS. THE TORIES CURRENTLY HAVE 52 SEATS AND THEIR CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATION PROBABLY IS THE BEST OF THE THREE MAJOR PARTIES. AS SEEMS TYPICAL WHEN TORIES BECOME CONFIDENT, UNCLASSIFIED

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THRE ARE SOME RUMBLINGS OF DISCONTENT IN PROVINCIAL PARTY EXECUTIVE REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING BUT, WHILE REFLECTING PC LOVE OF INTRNAL STRIFE, SHOULD HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON ELECTION OUTCOME.

3. NDP DOES NOT SEEM TO BE DOING AS WELL AS IN 1975, PERHAPS BECUASE 1977 CAMPAIGN, TYPICALLY WITHOUT STRIKING

ISSUES, DOES NOT EVEN HAVE IRRITANT OF RENT CONTROL ISSUE WHICH HELPED NDP IN 1975. ALSO, PARTY LEADER LEWIS HAS SHOWN SOME APPARENT CONFLICT WITH PARTY PHILOSOPHY -- E.G., NATIONALIZATION OF RESOURCES -- WHICH REINFORCES OPPONENTS' CLAIMS THAT IN LOOKING AT NDP, ONE MUST REMEMBER PQ IN QUEBEC WINNING ON GROUNDS OF GOOD GOVERNMENT AND THEN PUSHING SEPARATISM TO EXTREME -- NDP TRYING TO PROJECT IMAGE OF RESPONSIBLE CENTRALIST PARTY BUT SOCIALIST TENDENCY STILL STRONG. PCS USING ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN CUTTING MAN IN THE STREET IN VANCOUVER ON PROSPECT OF RETURN OF NDP GOVERNMENT IN B.C.

4. LIBERAL PARTY HAS CONTINUED RATHER SLUGGISH CAMPAIGN AND JUST MADE DEADLINE THIS WEEK TO NOMINATE CANDIDATES IN ALL PROVINCIAL RIDINGS. LEADER STUART SMITH HAVING CONTINUING PROBLEMS PROJECTING HIMSELF AS POLITICAL LEADER AS OPOSED TO PHILOSOPHER AND SUFFERING STRONG MEDIA CRITICISM/RIDICULE. IT IS EXPECTED THAT LIBERALS WILL RETIAN SOUTHWESTERN STRENGTH, LONDON, ESSEX, KENT COUNTIES, ETC., MAY RETAIN ONLY ONE SEAT IN METRO TORONTO AND ONE IN NORTHERN ONTARIO. ONE FREQUENTLY HEARS DISCUSSIONS BETWEENHIHJONTONPANS FEARING THIS ELECTION WILL MEAN DEMISE OF PROVINCIAL LIBERAL PARTY AND THAT THIS WILL EVENTUALLY MEAN AN NDP GOVERNMENT. MAJOR EFFECTS OF LIBERAL DECLINE WILL BE MEASURED MOST PROBABLY NOT ONLY ON LIBERAL REPRESENTATION IN ASSEMBLY BUT ALSO ON NDP CANDIDATES WHO WON FOR FIRST TIME IN 1975 BY SMALL MARGIN BECAUSE OF MAJOR VOTE SPLIT BETWEEN PC AND LIBERAL OPPONENTS.

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5. QUEBEC AND CANADIAN UNITY MAJOR NON-ISSUE IN CAMPAIGN WHICH DAVIS USING MOST EFFECTIVELY. ALL THREE PARTIES EMPHASIZE UNANIMITY ON SAVING CONFEDERATION BUT EVEN RAISING ISSUE REMINS VOTERS OF DAVIS AS WISE LEADER DEALING WITH QUEBEC, OF LEWIS' INITIAL HAPPINESS WITH VICTORY OF SOCIALIST-ORIENTED PARTY AND OF SMITH'S STRONG DEMANDS FOR ACTIVIST ROLE BY ONTARIO GOVERNMENT IN LEADING QUEBEC VOTERS BACK INTO FOLD -- AN IDEA THAT REALLY DIDN'T APPEAL EVEN TO LIBERALS.

DIGGINS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
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